

# The Road to Inclusive Practices: Fourth Report of the Mayor's Advisory Council on Special Education

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September 8, 2011

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Mayor Karl Dean  
Office of the Mayor  
Metro Courthouse  
Nashville, TN

Dear Mayor Dean:

Thank you for this fourth opportunity to develop recommendations to improve both educational and community opportunities for students receiving special education supports and services in Metro Nashville Public Schools. We support the statement you have made, “Nashville should lead the way in showing how ALL young people including those with disabilities should move from schools to the community prepared to work and be engaged citizens.”

Over the past year your advisory Council divided into four work groups and looked at supports, services and programs for students with disabilities. What follows are our recommendations for continued improvement. We think this can best be done by a small group of citizens and representatives of Metro Government and MNPS in the areas outlined.

We find it especially fitting to present today’s report, not in the Metro Courthouse as in previous years, but in the Metro Nashville Public Downtown Library. We moved the presentation here so that you could see MNPS students with disabilities working here. This program is the second within Metro Nashville Government and joins the new program introduced last year in partnership with Vanderbilt’s Project Opportunity and The Arc Davidson County’s Walmart School-to-Community Transition grant at the Metro Criminal Justice Center.

Our work would not have been possible without the commitment of our Council members and without the excellent support of Danielle Mezera, director of the Mayor’s Office of Children and Youth, and Debra McAdams, Executive Director of MNPS Exceptional Education, and her staff. Laurie Fleming, of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center, has provided administrative support.

For the first time, this report is being presented without one of our founding Co-Chairs, Wendy Tucker, a tireless advocate for individuals with disabilities and their families. We all salute her for her vision to work with you to create this Council. We could never have done this work without your support and your commitment to improve the lives of Nashville students with disabilities and their families. Thank you for your interest and your deep commitment to improving the educational experiences for ALL students.

Sincerely,

Elise McMillan

Linda DePriest

## **Mayor's Advisory Council Recommendations**

Much progress has been made since we received your charge in 2008:

*Assess the strengths and weaknesses of existing programs and policies for students who are identified as receiving special education services through the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) system. The advisory council will use the assessments to make objective recommendations as they pertain to the overall educational experiences of those students.*

However, much work remains to be done in MNPS. During 2010-2011, we focused our work in four key areas. Our recommendations coming from those four areas are:

1. **Continue using the dashboard checklist that has been developed exclusively for the Mayor's Advisory Council on Special Education. Monitor and report on MNPS progress around inclusionary practices and policies. This checklist should be strongly connected with the MNPS Exceptional Services Five-Year Strategic Plan.**  
Much hard work and study of previous Council reports have resulted in a number of key recommendations that should be followed in future years. Continually access, update, and comment on data related to inclusive practices in MNPS.
2. **Utilize data gathered in future independent reviews of the progress MNPS is making toward the inclusion goals and supporting instructional practices.**  
This work group was not able to complete its work this year, and this area should be considered again by next year's Council.
3. **Review annually the MNPS Exceptional Services Five-Year Strategic Plan.**  
This report sets forth achievements for the past two years. For the 2011-2012 school years, all rising kindergarten students will attend either their school of zone or their school of choice. This has never before happened in MNPS. MNPS intends to have fully implemented the Plan by the end of the 2013-2014 school years.
4. **Partner with Nashville's business community to develop employment and other community-based opportunities for students with disabilities.**  
Over the past two years, two additional community-based classrooms have been established within Metro Government. Working together, MNPS should ensure that career, internship and employment goals are set for ALL students, including those with disabilities. We have seen positive initial results, and this work should continue.

Going forward, we recommend the appointment of a small, diverse group (see suggested makeup below) who will be tasked specifically with monitoring and assessing the ongoing progress of MNPS around its inclusive policies and practices for students with disabilities. Their assessments will be data-driven. The group would release an annual progress report, spotlighting areas of

promise and areas of concern, with expected action by MNPS to address any identified areas of concern. Members should represent the following groups:

- Parents of current students receiving MNPS special education services at the elementary, middle school, and high school/secondary transition levels;
- Representative of the Mayor;
- Representative of MNPS Exceptional Services and administration;
- Representative of advocacy organization(s)
- MNPS classroom teacher - general education;
- MNPS classroom teacher - exceptional education services;
- Young adult with disabilities
- An employer of individuals with disabilities
- Community preschool provider
- Representatives from higher education and other adult service agencies.

## **Reports from Workgroups**

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## **Monitoring Workgroup Report**

**Continue using the dashboard checklist that has been developed exclusively for the Mayor's Advisory Council on Special Education. Monitor and report on MNPS progress around inclusionary practices and policies. This checklist should be strongly connected with the MNPS Exceptional Services Five-Year Strategic Plan.**

Much hard work and study of previous Council reports have resulted in a number of key recommendations that should be followed in future years. Continually access, update, and comment on data related to inclusive practices in MNPS.

A dashboard checklist was developed to track progress on specific data elements. Data gathered is Appendix B. Listed below are the specific topics:

1. Access to general education classes and curriculum for all students
2. Access to aftercare and summer programs \*
3. Child Find results
4. Data based decision making
5. Expansion of community-based classrooms within Metro Government
6. MNPS Family Advisory Council
7. Parent survey results
8. Parent trainings
9. Percentage of students receiving special education services in general education classrooms
10. Positive Behavior Support Plans at schools
11. Results at Stratford Secondary Transition Pilot Program
12. Trainings for educational assistants
13. Transportation programming
14. Website updates

\*The subcommittee was unable to track access to aftercare and summer programs.

## **Instruction/ Curriculum Workgroup Report**

**Utilize data gathered in future independent reviews of the progress MNPS is making toward the inclusion goals and supporting instructional practices.**

This work group was not able to complete its work this year, and this area should be considered again by next year's Council.

The instruction/curriculum workgroup was charged with developing and utilizing a checklist to evaluate classrooms, interpreting evaluations and then using the results to set recommendations for the 2011 report.

The group drafted an assessment tool that was presented to the Council in January 2011. At this time, MNPS representatives shared concerns they believed the Metropolitan Nashville Education Association (MNEA) would have with the proposed method of evaluation. Conversations continued outside of the meeting as concerns were raised in regards to the qualifications of the evaluators (the MAC workgroup members), MNPS involvement in the evaluation process, whether or not the evaluation visits would be announced, etc.

In the April meeting of the Council, the solutions that were presented by the workgroup did not resolve the concerns of the MNPS representatives and it became clear that the assessment was not going to be feasible within the time frame outlined by the Council.

In response to these issues, concerns, and the need for an evaluation, MNPS created a Request for Proposals (RFP) entitled "Evaluation of Special Education Services in MNPS." This RFP was posted on Metro Governments and Metro Schools websites on June 23. The purpose of this RFP was to provide:

"A comprehensive evaluation of MNPS services for students with disabilities during the 2011-2012 school year, through direct observation. Evaluation will include an assessment of (a) how both general and special education teachers are spending their time in classrooms that instruct either or both students with disabilities and students without disabilities, and (b) how students with disabilities are spending their time in general education and special education classrooms." (For full RFP, see website: <http://www.mnps.org/AssetFactory.aspx?did=61274>)

Proposals were submitted on July 15 and an evaluation team met on August 17 to begin evaluating the proposals. This team consisted of representatives from MNPS as well as the Council.

In July, Wendy Tucker, co-chair of the Mayor's Advisory Council and chair of the instruction/curriculum workgroup, resigned. Her concerns and reasons for her resignation are noted in her resignation letter to the Council. Appendix C. Due to the RFP not being completed within the time line set by the Council, a report for this workgroup is not possible at this time.

## **Strategic Plan Workgroup Report**

### **Review annually the MNPS Exceptional Services Five-Year Strategic Plan.**

This report sets forth achievements for the past two years. For the 2011-2012 school years, all rising kindergarten students will attend either their school of zone or their school of choice. This has never before happened in MNPS. MNPS intends to have fully implemented the Plan by the end of the 2013-2014 school years.

Following is a review of the Strategic Plan of the Department of Exceptional Services. In its 2008 and 2009 reports to the Mayor, the Mayor's Advisory Council on Special Education recommended that MNPS adopt inclusive practices on a district-wide basis. Specifically, the 2008 recommendation stated that:

### **Inclusive practices should be adopted comprehensively across MNPS. This will require the conversion of the current service delivery system to a model based on inclusive practices.**

This conversion should be guided by a consultant and an appointed task force who can work together to meet the needs of all MNPS students. This task force should be comprised of parents, educators (general education and special education), and other appropriate stakeholders. One of the most critical aspects of a conversion plan will be the professional development component, which must be sufficiently comprehensive to ensure the effective implementation of inclusive practices.

**All students must have access to the general curriculum. According to the MNPS Department of Special Education and the information gathered by the Advisory Council, access to the general curriculum is not available to some students with disabilities.** The Council advocates applying the concept of Universal Design and allocating the necessary resources so that all students have access to appropriate grade level instruction and materials. This concern is about more than resources and materials. At a very basic level, the general education curriculum is not being taught in some of Metro's self-contained classrooms. There must be a standard curriculum for all students and all classrooms.<sup>1</sup>

In last year's report, the MAC recommended to the Mayor that the leadership of MNPS, in consultation with the MAC, develop and implement a district-wide strategic plan for students receiving special education services.

In response to these recommendations, MNPS, over the course of the past few years, has developed a strategic plan ("the Plan") designed to convert the current service delivery model

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<sup>1</sup> This recommendation has been addressed through the Transformational Leadership Group that focuses on integrated service delivery. This group is made up of school personnel, community partners and families. Dr. Marilyn Friend has also been hired as a consultant for the next 5 years. Dr. Friend is the president of The Council of Exceptional Children and has much experience and expertise in working with urban districts as they move towards an integrated service delivery model.



from one based on the self-contained model, to one that employs fewer stigmatizing and segregating practices, and more inclusive practices. Elements of the Plan were first implemented in 2009, and Metro intends to have fully implemented the Plan by the end of the 2013-2014 school years. Through this Plan, the District will utilize and implement a model known as integrated comprehensive services (ICS), which refers to heterogeneous environments for all learners. The integrated portion refers to the settings that all students, regardless of need or legislative eligibility, access throughout their day in both school and non-school settings. It supports the act of all students with various needs, gifts and talents learning in an environment together in both small and large groups. The comprehensive services portion refers to the array of services and supports centered on a differentiated approach to curriculum and instruction. This differentiated approach ensures the success both academically and behaviorally for all.

Under ICS, all students attend their neighborhood school, or the school they would attend if they did not have a disability. This is a basic civil right. Students do not have to leave their peers in their classroom, school, or district to participate in a curriculum and instruction that meets their learning needs. All students are then afforded a rich schedule of flexible, small-group and large-group instruction based on learning needs, interests, and content areas. With ICS at the district level, particular schools would not be designated “the ESL school” or “the school that all the elementary students with severe disabilities attend” or “the middle school that houses the students with severe challenging behaviors.” At the school level, ICS does not preclude students with labels from being clustered in particular classrooms, but only to the extent that the number of these students in any one classroom does not represent a higher percentage than found in the school. Accordingly, with ICS, a school does not have rooms labeled the “resource room,” the “LD room,” the “CD room,” the “ESL room,” or even the “at-risk room.” With ICS, students are flexibly grouped based on the individual needs of the group of learners in the particular classroom and grade. All students’ learning takes place in a heterogeneous environment.

An overview of the targets/goals for each year of the five-year strategic plan is set forth below.

### ***Year 1***

During the 2009/2010 school year, the focus was on removing the physical and social barriers to inclusion. For example, the district worked on eliminating separate lunches and related arts for students with disabilities, locating self-contained special education classrooms within school buildings and on grade level hallways, and ensuring that students with disabilities had lockers alongside their non-disabled peers. Additionally, during Year 1, the district attempted to move all middle school students with disabilities to their schools of zone. The district learned during this year that more support and training would need to occur at the school level so that a true integrated delivery model would evolve.

### ***Year 2***

(2010-2011) The District Integrated Service Delivery Team determined that many of the Year 1 targets needed to be included again in Year 2 targets because they had not been met. The

District added some additional targets to Year 2 also. At the end of Year 2, some students were still not attending lunch with their general education homerooms. The District also wanted to increase the number of schools hosting community meetings regarding integrated service. Some of the targets, along with a description of the progress made or not made towards those targets, are set forth in the Appendix of this Report.

### ***Year 3***

For the 2011-2012 school years, all rising Kindergarten students will attend either their school of zone or school of choice. Students will receive services as outlined in their IEPs, and IEP teams are being encouraged to maximize the time that is spent by kindergarten students in the general education classroom. Services that cannot be delivered in the general education classroom will be provided in the ACE (Academic Center for Enhancement) classroom. To support this kindergarten initiative, beginning last spring and over the summer, personnel from Metro's special education department met with schools to assist with the mapping/allocation of resources necessary for the aforementioned kindergarten integration. Also in preparation for this initiative, a survey was conducted by an outside evaluator to gather information intended to provide a snapshot of the current status of inclusive practices.

During Year 3, in addition to monitoring the kindergarten integration initiative, Metro's special education department also will focus on planning for the phase-out of the use of categorical services and categorically-based self-contained classrooms.

### ***Years 4 and 5***

MNPS intends to expand the use of the ACE room up through all grade levels over the next two academic years, and to eliminate the use of categorical services. Thus, by the conclusion of the 2013-2014 school years, the vast majority of students with disabilities will be educated with supports and services in the general education environment, but may also receive some services in the ACE setting.

Additional information on developments related to the Strategic Plan is included in Appendix D.

## **Community-Based Job Training Workgroup Report**

### **Partner with Nashville's business community to develop employment and other community-based opportunities for students with disabilities.**

Over the past two years, two additional community-based classrooms have been established within Metro Government. Working together, MNPS should ensure that career, internship and employment goals are set for ALL students, including those with disabilities. We have seen positive initial results and this work should continue.

A number of activities have been developed in this area since the Mayor hosted his Summit on Secondary Transition two years ago. Following are highlights of the activities:

### **Community-Based Classroom Sites in Metro Government**

Two MNPS Community-Based Transition Program worksites are now housed within the Metro Nashville Government, at the Criminal Justice Center (CJC) and the Downtown Public Library. Four students participated in work activities at those sites during the 2010-2011 school years. It is anticipated that approximately 14 students will be distributed between the two sites during the 2011-2012 school year.

The Community-Based Transition Program typically serves students receiving special education services between 18 and 22 years of age. Each classroom has a teacher, two paraprofessionals and related service personnel as needed. There are generally 10 students per class in these sites, set within area businesses and organizations. In addition to the new Metro Government sites, additional sites are located at the Disaster Relief Center; Airport Marriott Hotel, Skyline Hospital-Madison Campus, United Methodist Publishing House and Vanderbilt Centre Building.

### **Work with Vocational Rehabilitation**

Two representatives of Vocational Rehabilitation Services of the State Department of Human Services have been members of the MAC for the past year. Voc Rehab revised assignments so that the same Voc Rehab Counselor serves all of the MNPS Community-Based Classrooms. This has resulted in a more effective working relationship to serve those MNPS students who are eligible for Voc Rehab services.

### **Involvement with Small Learning Communities**

This year, we have made progress toward inclusion of students receiving special education services in MNPS Small Learning Academies and work-based learning. MNPS has worked to ensure that all high school students receiving special education services have the opportunity to choose their academy/SLC pathway just as all other students do. This will continue to be part of students' Transition planning. Programs of study have been developed for all pathways to show the recommended coursework, related postsecondary options in our region, and potential career fields.

All high schools have been or are being trained in the use of project based/inquiry based learning and assessment. This training makes it possible for students receiving special education services to demonstrate mastery of content in their areas of strength.

As we move into the next year, we will be focused on increasing the work-based learning opportunities for students receiving special education services by identifying experiences for them that relate to their interests, transition plans and Small Learning Communities pathways. Additionally, we will begin the process of developing standards for exit points in pathways that reflect job level appropriate skills. This will require district level discussions with state personnel with respect to curriculum.

### **New District Wide Secondary Transition Fair**

MNPS held a Secondary Transition Fair at the Martin Center for students receiving special education services, families and the community in Spring 2011. More than 50 vendors from the community provided information on community services, postsecondary opportunities and other information. Plans are being made to expand the Secondary Transition Fair for Spring 2012.

### **Development of Community Awareness**

Along with representatives of The Arc Davidson County, the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, the Tennessee Business Leadership Network and other employers, MNPS and members of the MAC began a series of informal meetings with the goal of public awareness in the community about employing young adults with disabilities. This group will continue to work to increase community opportunities and the employment of people with disabilities in Nashville and Davidson County.

## ***Appendix***

- A. Members of the Mayor's Advisory Council
- B. Data for the Mayor's Advisory Council from the Monitoring Workgroup
- C. Letter from Wendy Tucker, former Co-Chair
- D. Additional Strategic Plan Workgroup Updates
- E. Community Based Employment Workgroup Updates

## ***Appendix A:***

### **Mayor's Advisory Council on Special Education Member List 2010-2011**

Deidra Adamczyk  
Department of Exceptional Education, MNPS

Gerry Altieri  
Department of Exceptional Education, MNPS

Jonathan Bolding  
John Early Middle School

Debbie L. Brown  
Department of Exceptional Education, MNPS

John Cobb  
Parent and Community Volunteer

Val Cobb  
Parent and Community Volunteer

Andrea Cooper  
Tennessee Department of Human Services

Linda DePriest  
Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Support, MNPS

Sara Ezell  
Program Director, Project Opportunity, Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Victoria Greer  
Department of Exceptional Education, MNPS

Catrina Haley  
Parent and Community Volunteer

Brian Mast  
Executive Principal, Antioch High School, MNPS

Debra McAdams  
Executive Director, Department of Exceptional Education, MNPS

Elise McMillan  
Co-Director, Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Excellence in Development Disabilities

Arie L. Nettles  
Associate Professor of Clinical Pediatrics  
Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt

Amanda Peltz  
Executive Director, Autism Society of Middle Tennessee

Rhonda Phillippi  
Parent and Community Volunteer

holly lu conant rees  
Exceptional Education Family Liaison, MNPS

Erin Richardson  
Parent and Attorney

Holly Ruskin  
Parent and Attorney

Mary Jane Ware  
Program Coordinator of Transition Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services, Tennessee  
Department of Human Services

Michelle Wilcox  
Executive Director of High Schools, MNPS

Marsha Wilson  
Educator and Community Outreach, Nashville Prevention Partnership

Mayor's Office  
Danielle Mezera

## ***Appendix B:***

### **Data for the Mayor's Advisory Council from the Monitoring Workgroup**

#### **1. Access to general education classes and curriculum for all students**

### **Percent of Exceptional Education Students Out of Zone**

- 13% of school age students were of out of zone for the 2010-11 school year.
- 10.9% of the school age students are projected to be out of zone for the 2011-12 school year.
- 531 Kindergarten students are projected for 2011-12 school year.
  - Currently only four are projected to be out of zone due to an exceptional education reason.





## Exceptional Education Out of Zone by Tier

K-4 (361 out of 3319)	11%
5-8 (135 out of 3005)	5%
9-12 (114 out of 2365)	4%
Special Day Schools (Except Cora Howe) (336 out of 8687)	4%

## Out of Zone by Reason

Appeal	14			
Charter	238			
Continuity	124			
Discipline	69			
EL	2			
Emergency Hardship	17			
Employee	22			
Exceptional Ed	610			
Grandfather	21			
Lottery	470			
NCLB	91			
Open Enrollment	245			
Pathway Continuity	12			
Sibling	16			
Specialty School	38			
Zoned Option	147			
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2136</b>			
Note: Does not include Harris Hillman, Johnson, Murrell and the contract schools (336 students)				

## Services by Gender

Service	Count
CBIP	284
F	56
M	228
Life Skills	1214
F	426
M	788
MIS-C	803
F	143
M	660
MIS-F	452
F	116
M	336
Resource	6687
F	2203
M	4484
Grand Total	9440

CBIP = Communication Behavior Intervention Program  
MIS = Moderate Intervention Support (C=Conduct, F=Fragile)



## CBIP Services By Disability

[illegible]

## Lifeskills by Disability

Life Skills	1210
Autism	194
Blind	2
Deafness	2
Developmental Delay	174
Emotional Disturbance	7
Functional Delay	78
Hearing Impairments	2
Intellectual Disability	623
Language Impairments	22
Multiple Disabilities	26
Orthopedic Impairments	15
Other - Health Impairments	41
Specific Learning Disability	10
Speech Impairments	7
Traumatic Brain Injury	6
Visual Impairments	1



## MIS-C by Disability

MIS-C	781
Autism	16
Blind	1
Developmental Delay	35
Emotional Disturbance	309
Functional Delay	32
Intellectual Disability	25
Language Impairments	16
Orthopedic Impairments	2
Other - Health Impairments	220
Specific Learning Disability	125



## MIS-F by Disability

<b>MIS-F</b>	<b>439</b>
<b>Autism</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Blind</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Developmental Delay</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Emotional Disturbance</b>	<b>179</b>
<b>Functional Delay</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Intellectual Disability</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Language Impairments</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Orthopedic Impairments</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Other - Health Impairments</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Specific Learning Disability</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Speech Impairments</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Traumatic Brain Injury</b>	<b>2</b>

## Resource by Disability

Resource	6465
Autism	394
Blind	9
Deafness	13
Developmental Delay	451
Emotional Disturbance	453
Functional Delay	331
Hearing Impairments	37
Intellectual Disability	278
Intellectually Gifted	66
Language Impairments	962
Multiple Disabilities	12
Orthopedic Impairments	39
Other - Health Impairments	928
Specific Learning Disability	2347
Speech Impairments	120
Traumatic Brain Injury	15
Visual Impairments	10

## Modified Academic Achievement Standards (TCAP MAAS)

MAAS Sub Test	Count of Participation Area
TCAP English/Reading/Language Arts Achievement (Grades 3-8)	2504
TCAP Mathematics Achievement (Grades 3-8)	2518
TCAP Science Achievement (Grades 3-8)	2496
TCAP Social Studies Achievement (Grades 3-8)	2493
Grand Total	10011

## Exceptional Education Graduation Rate

Indicator 1 - Graduation				
	2008	2009	2010	2010 State Target
Youth with IEPs (%)	55.70	53.46	56.69	Increase of 1.5% from previous school year

## Exceptional Education Drop Outs

Dropouts				
	2008	2009	2010	2010 State Target
Youth with IEPs (%)	26.47	29.27	4.89	Decrease by 1.5% from previous school year

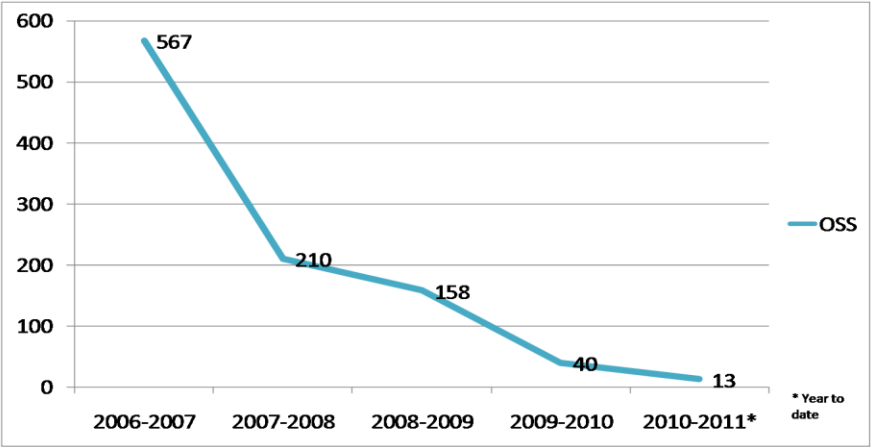
## Suspension and Expulsion

Suspension and Expulsion				
	2008	2009	2010	2010 State Target
Districts Identified by State (%)	27.41	26.47	33.82	Decrease by 1.5% from previous school year
Was this district identified?	Yes	Yes	Yes	

## Additional Data

OSS Counts						
Incident counts by Disability			2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
	Without		26,096	21,370	17,131	10,593
	With Disabilities		6,546	5,910	4,346	2,768
	<b>District Total</b>		<b>32,642</b>	<b>27,280</b>	<b>21,477</b>	<b>13,361</b>

## Suspension Over 10 Days



We are waiting for the state report for the final 2010-11 number of students over 10 days.

## 2. Access to aftercare and summer programs

The subcommittee was unable to track access to aftercare and summer programs.

### 3. Child Find results

## Child Find Results

- Child Find Results From the 2010 State Report Card- Davidson County showed that only 89.68% of initial eligibilities were completed in 40 days.
- MNPS developed a plan to increase the Child Find.
- Melanie Karsanac from the State Department of Special Education met with MNPS leadership and the psychologists to review procedures for initial eligibility.
- Tracking logs are now being used by the psychologists.
- EasyIEP procedures have been updated.
- Increase in number of private\homes school students being identified.





#### 4. Data based decision making

### Data Based Decision Making

- Information is difficult to obtain about data use at the individual IEP level.
- Assessments such as WCJ III have been purchased for use by teachers.
- Training during the summer was offered to develop goals that are based on assessment data.
- Staff have been trained in the use of the Data Warehouse.
  - Reports are available for exceptional education.



## 5. Expansion of community-based classrooms with Metro Government

### Expansion of Community-Based Classrooms with Metro Government

- One class at the at the Criminal Justice Center.
- Students began work at the Nashville Public Library on 5/2/11 and will continue into the 2011 – 2012 school year.
- New coordinator will be hired to address transition.
- General Services has approached MNPS about a community based site.



## 6. MNPS Family Advisory Council

### MNPS Family Advisory Council

- Marc Hayes, Director of Exceptional Education and Holly Luconantrees, MNPS parent liaison are forming the MNPS Family Advisory Council.
- Introduction meetings were held March 22 and April 1.
- Membership was identified for the next meeting.
- The next meeting is scheduled to occur August 4.



## 7. Parent survey results

### Parent Survey Results

- Based on the 2009-10 State parent survey parents need training about special education issues.
- Parents also need information from the school about agencies that help child in post secondary transition.
- A new survey was sent out during May 2011 to families that were selected by the State. Results are being tabulated by the state and will be made available to MNPS during the fall.
- Marylyn Friend has conducted two focus groups about inclusive practices.
- An additional focus group has also been scheduled.



## 8. Parent trainings

## Parent Trainings

- Parent workshops were offered by exceptional education early childhood on 11/5/10; 12/8/10; 2/18/11; and 4/6/11.
- The trainings were unattended by parents.
- MNPS will work with Office of Vocational Services to provide workshops for parents.

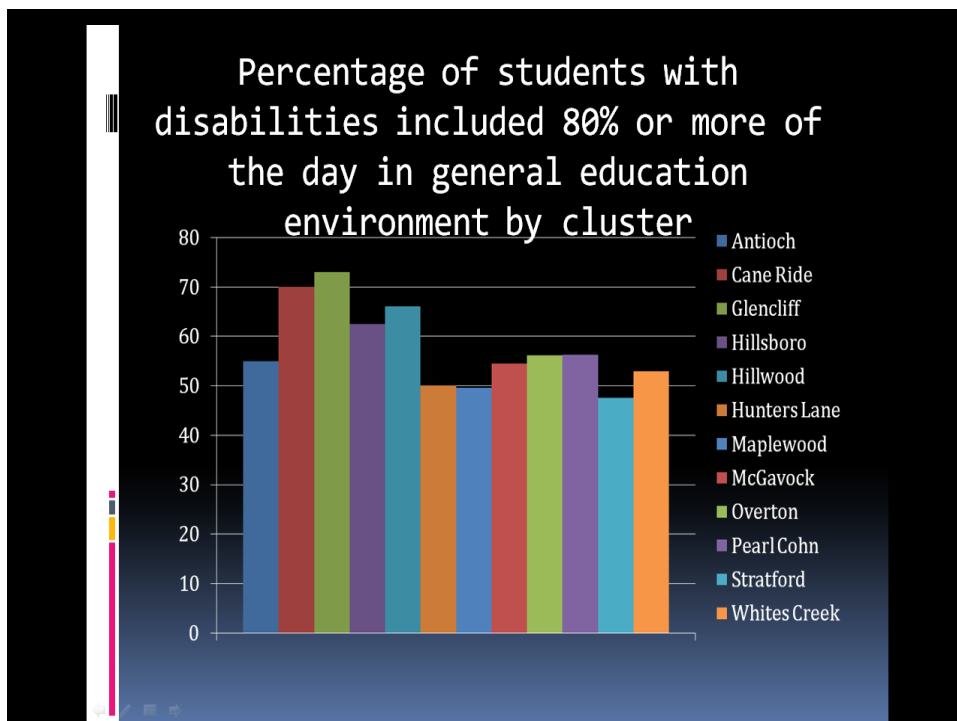
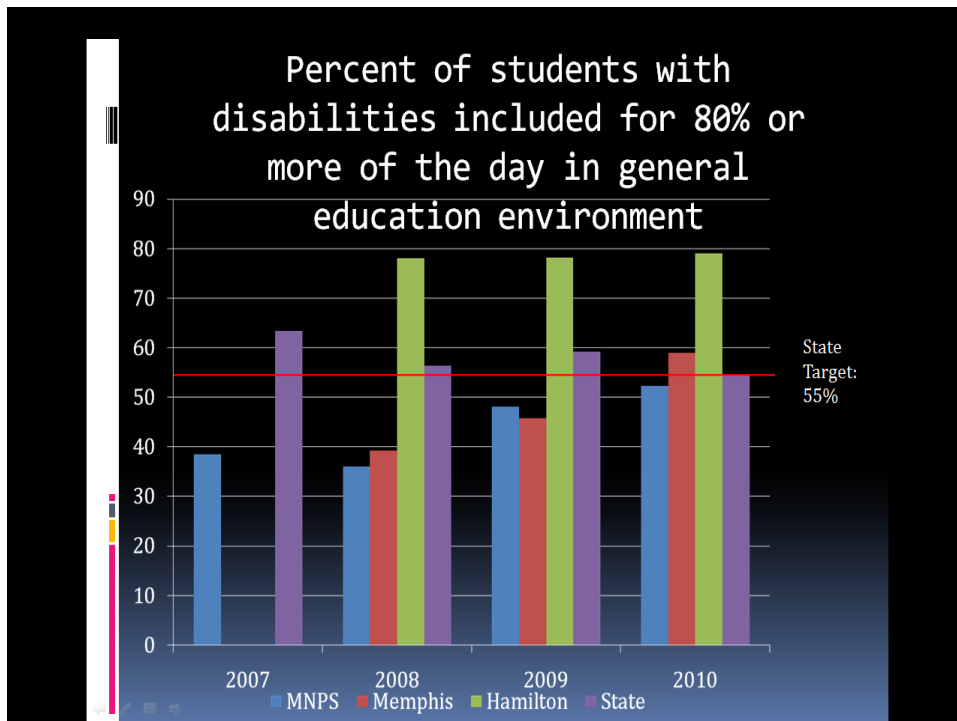


### 9. Percentage of students receiving special education services in general education classrooms

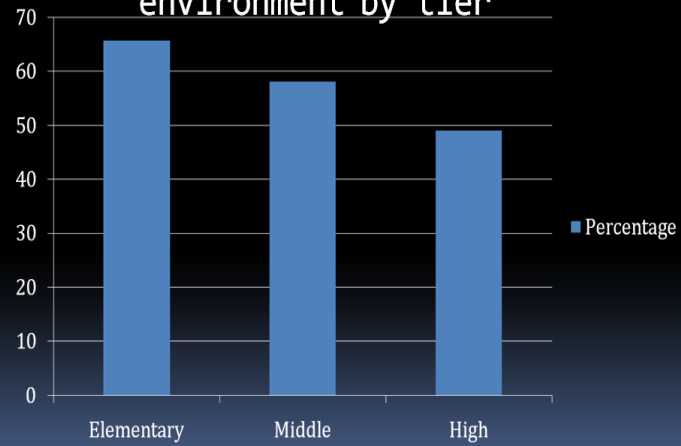
## Access to General Education Setting

LRE Placement (Indicator 5)				
	2007	2008	2009	2010
In the general education environment 80% or more of the day	38.5%	36.08%	48.13%	52.27%
In the general education environment 40% or less of the day	22.75%	23.19%	18.89%	17.84%
Public or private separate schools, residential placements, or homebound/hospital placements	6.09%	6.34%	4.25%	3.08%





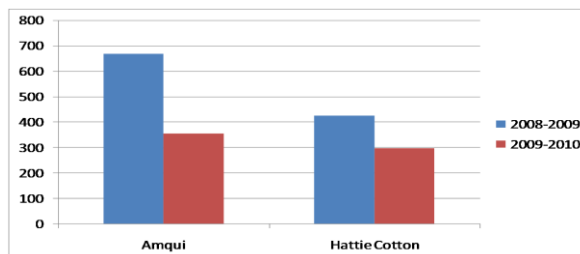
Percentage of students with disabilities included 80% or more of the day in general education environment by tier



## 10. Positive Behavior Support Plans at schools

## Positive Behavior Support Plans at Schools

- 38 Schools are using PBS.
- PBS has shown an increase in instructional time and administrative time.
- Example of Results:



### 11. Results at Stratford Secondary Transition Pilot Program

## Results at Stratford Secondary Transition Pilot Program

- Principles of Transition I & II are offered at Stratford.
- SunTrust Bank continues to work with the Stratford classes.
- Principles of Transition I now in ten high schools.
- Principles of Transition II now in five high schools with more after master schedules complete.



## Additional Transition Information

- Community Based sites have expanded, including a job site at Bransford.
- A transition fair was held at Martin Professional Development Center for families.
- Freshman participate in the Ninth grade seminar at the comprehensive high schools.
- High school students are attached to an academy.
- Each student 14 years of age and over has a transition plan.
- Johnson and Cora Howe have developed work based learning activities.
- 29 students are projected to the Community Based sites.



### 12. Trainings for educational assistants



## Trainings for educational assistants

- 2010-11 workshops offered:
  - The Wingman: Roles and Responsibilities of the Paraprofessional
  - CPR
  - Autism and Inclusion Comprehensive 3-Day Training
- Total trained: 155
- October 17 – 21 (fall break), Workshops will be offered to paraprofessionals



### 13. Transportation programming

## Transportation Programming

- Currently working with transportation to review current policies.
- Identifying all students on special transportation and identifying the reason on special transportation.
- MNPS is updating EasyIEP to allow for faster processing for transportation orders.
- The Autism team is providing staff development for all bus drivers and monitors August 5.



### 14. Website updates

## Website Updates

- Updated list of itinerants posted on mnps.org & the employee portal (2011.03.24).
- holly lu conant rees reviewed and suggested changes to the MNPS website.
- MNPS is currently reviewing the suggestions.

## ***Appendix C***

### **Letter from Wendy Tucker, former Co-Chair**

Dear Members of the Mayor's Advisory Council on Special Education,

It is with very mixed emotions that I inform you of my resignation as co-chair and member of the Mayor's Advisory Council on Special Education. I can remember clearly the day that Mayor Dean proposed the creation of this task force, and I am proud of the work we have done to give families a voice for their concerns and to recommend much needed changes in the educational experience of students with disabilities in Metro Nashville Public Schools. I am truly honored to have worked with each of you, and I will always owe a debt of gratitude to you for the time you sacrificed and the commitment you made to improving the educational experiences of these students. I firmly believe that the work of this council has made a real difference in the lives of many children.

However, I made a promise to myself that I would be a part of this group only as long as I felt that I could effect positive change for these children. As most of you know, I do not have a fondness for attending meetings just for the sake of attending meetings. I am more interested in action than in talking about it. Because of issues that arose during this last year of the Council, it has become clear to me that I am no longer able to bring about needed change while serving as a co-chair and member of this Council. Therefore, I have chosen to resign effective immediately.

As I told Mayor Dean when I informed him of my decision, I will be forever grateful to him for being a voice for these special children and their families. His continued commitment to making sure that MNPS provides a quality education for ALL students, regardless of their abilities, has made a huge difference in the lives of so many. Similarly, I will never forget the positive changes that have occurred in MNPS because of the dedication and extremely hard work of this Council. It has been a true pleasure meeting and getting to know all of you.

I hope you each know that my focus has always been, and will always be, these precious children. My resignation from the Council should not be interpreted as a lack of interest in the future of these children. To the contrary, with the formation of the Special Education Advocacy Center of Tennessee, I plan to now devote my time and energy to making sure that these children get the quality educational experience to which they are entitled under the law. I am looking forward to seeing and working with many of you during those endeavors. Please know that I will always be available and willing to do anything I can to assist any of you.

All My Best,

Wendy S. Tucker

## ***Appendix D***

### **Additional Strategic Plan Workgroup Updates**

**1. Elimination of separate lunches and related arts integrate students at grade level.**

MNPS reports that all separated related arts have been eliminated, and that the mapping process ensures that students attend related arts with their grade level peers. High schools are still struggling with collapsing the separated lunches for students receiving MIS and life skills services. The District reports that it is working to specifically identify schools and teachers, and will be meeting with individual principals in an attempt to bring these practices to an end.

**2. Classrooms located within buildings on grade level hallways.**

MNPS reports that most of the special education classrooms are now located within the school building on grade level hallways. The only classrooms still located in portables are in schools with space issues where many different classes are in portables.

**3. Student lockers located amongst grade levels with typical peers.**

This year's Kindergarten integration initiative ensures that each kindergarten student entering school will have their home base in a general education kindergarten classroom with their cubbies and such located in that particular class. High schools now assign lockers by academies in most instances. During the 2011-2012 school years, MNPS will focus on ensuring that students receiving life skills and MIS services are assigned to an academy of choice aligned to their transition plan.

**4. The use of weekly lesson plans for students with disabilities.**

MNPS reports that weekly lesson plans will be required this year as part of the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system that ties daily classroom instruction to the planning process and teacher's weekly/daily lesson plans.

**5. All students with disabilities spend at least part of each day with student without disabilities.**

(This was a Year 1 target) - Kindergarten integration and the mapping process should ensure that this will happen this school year, at least for kindergarten students. There should be an increase in the number of students receiving access to general education at least a portion of the school day. MNPS reports that while elementary schools are on target, middle and high schools are still struggling with students who have behavior needs and who have significant disabilities.

**6. The general curriculum is used to teach students taking the TCAP/EOC/GATEWAY.**

MNPS reports that all students taking the TCAP/EOC/GATEWAY are being instructed with grade level standards and spend a portion of their school day with a general education teacher to be instructed by a certified teacher in the content area. Now the District's focus is to ensure that the time spent with a special education teacher is focusing on the deficit in skills to ensure that the achievement gap is closing between students with and without disabilities.

**7. Alternative standards used with students who take an alternate assessment.**

MNPS reports that all students taking an alternate assessment are instructed with the alternate standards at all tiers, in all services. The District states that it will now focus on ensuring that students taking an alternate assessment are meaningfully included in general education with support and still working on appropriate standards based on their needs.

**8. Change to people-first language.**

Videos have been created that have been shared with all school buildings; special education staff continues to promote, educate and encourage the use of people first/MNPS language.

## ***Appendix E***

### **Community Based Employment Workgroup Updates**

The MAC and the Mayor's Office provided a venue in which to recruit Metro Government departments with an interest in supporting the Exceptional Education Department's longstanding community-based transition (CBTP) worksites for students 18-22. Thanks to Mayor Dean's enthusiastic support and commitment, and funding from The Arc Davidson County and Wal-Mart Foundation School-to-Community Transition Project, two MNPS Community-based Transition Program worksites are now housed within the Metro Nashville Government, at the Criminal Justice Center (CJC) and the Downtown Public Library. Four students participated in work activities at those sites during the 2010-2011 school years. It is anticipated that approximately 14 students will be distributed between the two sites during the 2011-2012 school year.

Numerous planning meetings, with representation from all key partners (MNPS Transition Coordinators, The Arc Davidson County, Project Opportunity, the MAC and Metro Nashville Government personnel) took place during the 2010/11 school year, focused on:

- identification and cultivation of job sites
- disability "etiquette" and awareness for current Metro staff at the host sites
- identification of specific tasks or "rotations" at the job site
- task analysis, paired with appropriate accommodations and supports

MNPS has contributed in-kind support, provided classroom teachers, support staff and transportation. The Wal-Mart grant provided funding to Project Opportunity for the critical activities of identifying appropriate work rotations and conducting photographic task analyses at the Criminal Justice Center so that students have step by step visual models to follow. Project Opportunity has also trained Metro Government staff in disability awareness. The Arc has been involved in student selection and the IEP process.

To date, photographic Task Analyses have been completed for two jobs identified at Metro Criminal Justice Center (CJC): warehouse supply center to include stocking, delivery and inventory, and filing with Youth Services. The task analysis for the scanning job is close to completion. Low tech accommodations and supports, such as color-coded dots, have been identified and applied. Notebooks with laminated task breakdowns have been completed and provided to each student. In addition, Project Opportunity identified and implemented a labeling system for the central supply warehouse which will increase efficiency for all users. Students and staff will have opportunities to interact socially through a shared lunch/break room.

An additional worksite has been identified and developed at the Downtown Public Library, with tasks to include reshelving and custodial jobs. We expect 14 students to participate in the project at the two Metro Government worksites in the 2011-2012 school years. Selection occurred through review of students' previous IEPs, recommendations from the students' previous teachers/community-based programs, and consultation among MNPS staff and The Arc. Teachers and paraprofessionals for both sites have been identified.

An MNPS educator and The Arc's Project Director attended the 2011 Wal-Mart grantees meeting, which featured a session on sustainability planning. All students at both Metro Government sites will undergo initial and ongoing assessment of self-determination and independent living skills. The project aims to increase student participation and investment in the development of Individualized Education Programs, IEPs.

While MNPS has offered community-based transition worksites to students for a number of years, those programs have not had the explicit goal of leading to job placement at those worksites as the students transition out of the public school system. A focus on the "soft skills," such as interaction with co-workers, punctuality and problem-solving, necessary for successful employment should increase the likelihood that graduates will find and keep jobs.

The model which Project Opportunity utilizes at Vanderbilt Children's Hospital allows for ongoing consultation and technical assistance for each student who is hired to work in a Vanderbilt department. There is currently no analogous funded mechanism through which a public school system can provide follow-along and episodic support and consultation in the workplace.

The most dramatic success brought about by this collaborative effort is Mayor Dean's stated commitment to provide a national level model for employing students with intellectual and developmental disabilities in city government.